

Higher education in TAFE: Support document

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Overview

This is the support document for *Higher education in TAFE* and *Higher education in TAFE: An issues paper* (both available at <<http://www.ncver.edu.au>>. The purpose of this support document is to:

- ✧ provide a fuller version of the literature review than in the report and issues paper
- ✧ provide the interview schedules that were used to gather the data for this project.

Literature review

This literature review explores countries with comparable systems of tertiary education to analyse the relationship between mixed sector institutions and the structure of tertiary education in those countries and the nature of the opportunities that are created for students to participate in higher education. It focuses particularly on England because of the similarities between our tertiary education systems. The literature review first revisits the definition of mixed-sector institutions that we have used in this project and the way they are differentiated from single-sector and dual-sector institutions within tertiary education in Australia. It then analyses the reasons for the emergence of mixed-sector institutions in comparable countries and the way they have been constituted as a consequence of tertiary education policies. Next, it outlines a framework to analyse the development of learning cultures within mixed-sector institutions, and this is then applied to an analysis institutional, staff and student identities. The next two sections consider the institutional contexts for navigating students' transitions and students' experiences of these transitions. The conclusion suggests ways in which provision of higher education in TAFE can be supported so that it opens rather than limits opportunities for students.

The findings from this literature review are that the growth of mixed-sector institutions will become an increasingly important mechanism for expanding higher education provision and for providing access to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, such provision develops within and is structured by a highly stratified system of tertiary education. Consequently, while the growth of this provision may offer new opportunities for students, it may also contribute to the further differentiation and stratification of higher education. The review concludes by identifying issues arising from the literature that affect higher education in TAFE in Australia.

What are mixed-sector institutions?

There are ten TAFE institutes in five states that have been registered by their state higher education registering bodies to offer higher education qualifications, with half in Victoria. We have called these TAFEs mixed-sector institutions because most of their student load is in vocational education and training (VET) and they have a small amount of higher education provision as well. A TAFE, university or private educational provider can be a mixed-sector institution. The focus of this project is on mixed-sector TAFE institutes that offer degrees and associate degrees. Associate degrees are 'short-cycle' two-year higher education qualifications which are similar to the vocationally focused two-year foundation degrees in England.

The development of mixed sector institutions is relatively recent in Australia compared to countries with broadly similar systems. Further education colleges in Britain and community colleges in Canada and the United States have long had provision of short-cycle higher education as part of their designated roles, in addition to offering a range of vocational qualifications (Parry 2005a; American Association of Community Colleges 2003). The sectors of tertiary education in Australia have, until recently, been differentiated by the nature of provision offered in each, with VET offering competency-based qualifications and higher education offering curriculum-based

qualifications. The focus in Australian tertiary education policy has been on constructing institutional and administrative arrangements that maintain sectoral differentiation in qualifications and in institutions, but at the same time developing pathways between VET and higher education qualifications. The five dual-sector universities are one example of this approach because even though they integrate administration and student support, qualifications and teaching remain sectorally differentiated and pathways are used as the main mechanism to transcend the sectoral divide within the institution. Other institutional arrangements that have emerged to manage partnerships between the sectors whilst maintaining the distinction between them include partnerships between single-sector TAFEs and universities, and co-locations. The latter mostly consist of co-located satellite campuses of a university and a TAFE institute (and sometimes a senior secondary school campus) in regional Australia or on the outskirts of big cities (Wheelahen & Moodie 2005).

In the *Higher Education in TAFE Discussion Paper* we differentiated between single-sector institutions, dual-sector institutions and mixed-sector institutions. Single sector institutions have almost all their student load in one sector – in VET or higher education. Dual-sector institutions offer a substantial proportion of their load in each sector. Mixed sector institutions describe VET or higher education institutions with some offerings in the other sector, with these offerings being a small (if growing) part of their provision. In the Discussion Paper we proposed the following tripartite classification of institutions by their mix of sectoral student load (Moodie 2008):

- ✧ single-sector institutions – those with more than 97% of their student load enrolled in one sector;
- ✧ mixed-sector institutions – those with at least 3% but no more than 20% of their student load enrolled in their minority sector; and
- ✧ dual-sector institutions – those with at least 20% but less than 80% of their student load enrolled in each sector.

We differentiate between dual-sector and mixed-sector institutions by considering the proportion of total student load that must be in each sector before provision from the ‘other’ sector is no longer considered an exception and is generally accepted as a normal part of the institution requiring formal recognition and accommodation in decision making and administrative processes. At what point does this transition take place? Trow (1974, p.63) argued that the transition from elite to mass higher education occurs when participation of the relevant age group reaches 15 per cent. The nature of the system, institutions and provision fundamentally changes at that point (this is discussed further in the next section). Moodie (2009) related this to the concept of ‘tipping point’ (Grodzins 1958) and referred to a number of empirical studies of different tipping points to posit that an institution is dual-sector when its student load in each sector ranges from a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 80%.

Such a classification scheme is important because of the changing character and current blurring of the sectoral divide in Australia. In contrast, the English literature uses the terms ‘mixed economy’ (we prefer the term ‘mixed-sector’) and ‘dual-sector’ interchangeably and does not differentiate between them. While further education colleges have always offered higher education programs in the UK this role was relatively neglected in policy until the late 1990s, which was when government designated the growth of foundation degrees in further education colleges as an important way to expand provision of higher education (Parry 2005b). However, the focus of policy was on the expansion of higher education provision in further education colleges rather than the establishment of dual-sector institutions. The notion that dual-sector institutions were somehow different and that their dual-sector character was important in shaping their institutional mission and the kinds of opportunities they offered to students is relatively recent and does not yet characterise the way these institutions see themselves. Smith

(2008, p.78) explains that the primary sectoral location of dual-sector institutions in England continues to matter, even though they:

found examples of institutions in varying degrees of transition around and across the FHE [further higher education] sector boundary. However, in some systems (e.g. Australia and Canada) there is a more developed or distinct identity of dual-sector, our case studies indicate this identity to be much less evident than the concept of 'mixed economy'. Distinctiveness, even in mixed economy institutions, continues to be defined by institutional leaders primarily in terms of attachment to a sector – further or higher education. In our case study institutions, 'duality' was rarely deployed as a meaningful aspect of organizational identity.

It is useful to distinguish between dual-sector and mixed-sector institutions in Australia because we can compare them to analyse the different kinds of demands they face and the way they construct their institutional arrangements. The demands on each type of institution are different. Dual-sector institutions must report to two levels of government and construct their internal governance, administration and policies to meet each sector's different accreditation, funding, reporting, and quality assurance requirements. Mixed-sector institutions are not yet under the same pressure as dual-sector institutions to develop dual structures and most arrangements for programs in the other sector can be handled as exceptions to their normal structures, systems and processes (Moodie 2009), even if they find these processes onerous and an obstacle to expanding their provision.

Both the dual-sectors and the mixed-sector institutions emphasise the 'seamless' transition of students from VET to higher education qualifications, but they do so in different ways. The mixed-sector institutions emphasise their vertical integration of programs and teaching whereas the dual-sectors emphasise pathways from VET to higher education qualifications by moving from one sector to the other. There are exceptions where dual-sector universities construct programs that consist of elements drawn from both sectors, but overall the emphasis is on pathways between qualifications in the sectors with credit for prior studies. Students are generally taught in the dual-sectors by different teaching staff in each sector who work under different industrial conditions. The situation is not so clear cut in mixed-sector TAFEs. While a substantial number of teachers who teach in higher education teach in these programs exclusively, somewhat more teach across both higher education and VET. In both cases, TAFE teachers are mostly located in teaching departments that contain both higher education and VET provision. In all cases in the TAFEs with higher education that were included in this project, TAFE higher education teachers are employed under the same industrial award as other TAFE teachers.

Higher education programs are less than three per cent of total student load in most of the ten TAFE institutes that offer higher education programs so these institutes do not yet have sufficient higher education student load to be classified as a mixed-sector institution, but this is the trajectory in which a number of them are heading. For example, both Box Hill Institute of TAFE (2008) and Holmesglen Institute of TAFE (2008) argued in their submissions to the Review of Australian Higher Education that a new type of tertiary education institution be designated as either university colleges or polytechnics which are able to offer a range of programs from VET certificate level programs to higher education programs. Comparing mixed-sector TAFEs with dual-sector universities in Australia has been important in helping to understand how the mixed-sector TAFE institution, staff and students construct their own identities, because they do so in contrast to other TAFEs, single-sector universities, and dual-sector universities. In particular, it allows us to trace the tensions that arise from mixed sector provision, and the pressure this places on the notion of a vertically integrated institution. This is explored in the *Higher education in TAFE report*, but it was a theme that emerged from the literature and this helped to shape the design of the project and the research questions.

Why have mixed-sector institutions emerged?

Mixed sector institutions are a product of universal tertiary education systems in Anglophone countries such as Britain, the United States, Canada and New Zealand, and now, Australia. Martin Trow (1974) famously distinguished between elite, mass and universal higher education systems. Trow described a higher education system in which up to 15% of the relevant age group participate as elite, those with 16-50% participation as mass, and those in which half the population or more of the relevant age group participates as a universal system. Most industrialised countries have been progressively moving from elite to universal systems over the last 30-40 years in response to changes in society, the economy and technology (Trow 2005).

Trow argues that the nature of higher education institutions, curriculum and pedagogy changes as the system moves from being elite to mass and then universal. The purpose of elite systems is to prepare the social elite, and this is reflected in a curriculum that is based on 'shaping the mind and character' of students through highly structured concepts of academic and professional knowledge. Institutions are relatively small and homogeneous with clear boundaries that mark the academic community off from the rest of society. In contrast, the purpose of mass systems is to transmit knowledge and to prepare this segment of the population for a broader range of technical and economic leadership roles. The curriculum is modular, more flexible, and consists of semi-structured sequences within institutions that are comprehensive with standards that are more diverse and boundaries that are more fuzzy and permeable. The purpose of universal systems is to prepare the whole population for rapid social and technological change. The boundaries between formally structured knowledge and the everyday in the curriculum begin to break down, as do the distinctions between the educational institution and other aspects of life, including the workplace (Trow 2005, p.64). Access to higher education takes on renewed importance in universal systems because it mediates access to a much wider range of jobs than elite systems, and to the lifestyle and culture associated with high levels of education (Scott 2003, p.74). The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (1998, p.37) explains that 'Access, therefore, is not merely to an institution but to a way of life, not for the few but for all.' Consequently, universal systems must meet two challenges: the first is to ensure that higher education provision meets the knowledge and skills requirements of the economy and society; and second, to ensure that there is equitable access.

England and Australia followed a similar trajectory in expanding their higher education provision. Both did so through the establishment of a new sector of higher education in the 1950s and 1960s resulting in a binary divide between universities and 'other' higher education institutions. In England this occurred through the creation of colleges of advanced technology in 1956 and polytechnics in the 1960s (Scott 2008, p.44). In Australia this occurred through the creation of colleges of advanced education in 1964 (Martin 1964; Davis 1989). Australia created a unified higher education system in 1988 and England in 1992. Both countries did so by redesignating CAEs and polytechnics as universities, which was accompanied in Australia by widespread amalgamations of higher education institutions with each other and with other universities (Dawkins 1988, Pratt 1999). Growth in higher education occurred first through growth in the binary higher education system, and then through growth in the unified university systems.

The result was that further education in England and TAFE in Australia were not seen as part of the higher education system, even though further education colleges in England continued to offer short-cycle higher education qualifications. This is why Parry and Thompson (2002) refer to the period until the mid-1990s as the period of low or no policy. Before the 1996 Dearing Review of Higher Education which recommended that expansion of higher education occur through foundation degrees in further education colleges, higher education provision in further education was not consistently part of broader higher education policy, funding, regulatory or quality assurance arrangements (Parry 2005a p.13). In Australia the question of TAFE's role as a provider of higher education did not arise until recent years because, unlike the UK and

UNESCO's international standard classification of education, diplomas have not been understood as a higher education qualification since the late 1970s; and because TAFE's purpose defined in policy has been to deliver competency-based qualifications designed to meet industry needs as part of a broader VET sector.

Mixed-sector institutions have developed differently in each country. In England government policy explicitly designated a role for the delivery of foundation degrees as part of a broader higher education policy framework. The 'special mission' of further education colleges in delivering foundation degrees was to widen participation in higher education by students from non-traditional backgrounds, provide access to bachelor degrees, and to contribute to upgrading the skill levels of the workforce (Parry 2005b pp.76-77). Foundation degrees are publicly funded and government developed explicit strategies and provided funding to support the development of this provision (Higher Education Funding Council for England [HECFE] 2003b) even if this did not address all the dilemmas and issues associated with the delivery of higher education in further education. In contrast, in Australia the provision of higher education in TAFE has occurred as a consequence of government policies to increase competition within a more 'diverse' marketised higher education sector. Higher education in TAFE has not, until recently, been publicly funded. TAFEs are regarded as private higher education providers that compete with other providers to deliver full-fee higher education programs. There is as yet no specific public policy role for TAFE in delivering higher education and arguably there will not be unless TAFE is able to generally access public funding for this provision. The Australian government has announced that it will introduce a 'student-driven' funding system by 2012 in higher education so that institutions are funded only if students choose to enrol there, and institutions will compete with each other for students who bring the funding with them (Gillard, 2009a). This may be a means for TAFE to obtain public funding for higher education generally. In April 2009 the government allocated 40 public higher education places to Holmesglen Institute of TAFE for the bachelor of nursing (Ross 2009a), but it has not yet indicated whether it will allocate further specific public higher education places to TAFE or include TAFEs in the 'student driven' funding system generally, with some commentators thinking that it will and others think that it won't (Ross 2009b).

The expansion of higher education in the United States took place within the existing formally differentiated systems of higher education which consists of two-year community colleges which offer two year associate degrees, four year colleges and universities which offer up to masters degrees, and the elite doctoral granting universities (Douglass 2003). Unlike further education colleges in England and TAFE institutes in Australia, US community colleges are explicitly considered higher education institutions (Dougherty 2008, p.10) and their financing, student fees and curriculum are similar to and in some states the same as those for four-year colleges and universities. Grubb (2006, p.29) explains that community colleges were first established in 1918 'as efforts to extend high school to Grades 13 and 14, and as efforts to create two-year post-secondary institutions relieving research-oriented universities of the need to provide the first two years of a four-year program.'

Unlike earlier periods of expansion of higher education which occurred through the growth of university systems, this process of expansion is occurring through publicly funded non-university providers in the more vocationally oriented sectors of tertiary education and through the growth of private educational providers in Australia and in Anglophone countries with similar systems. In the United States ten states have authorised their community colleges to offer bachelor degrees and so go beyond their traditional provision of two-year associate degrees even though this provision remains small (Community College Baccalaureate Association 2008). In Canada three provinces have approved their community colleges to offer bachelor degrees (Levin 2004). The New Zealand Government is also encouraging growth in degrees offered by institutes of technology and polytechnics 'where the impact on productive capability is the greatest' (Ministry of Education 2006, p.15).

The rationale for the development of mixed-sector institutions is twofold. First, they are seen as a key mechanism for increasing access to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Foster 2005; Garrod & Macfarlane 2009). The prevailing view is that higher education in these settings is more accessible because the learning environment differs from that in universities. Classes are smaller and there are higher levels of student contact, and there is more emphasis on helping academically 'under-prepared' students acquire the skills they need to study in higher education. The mixed-sector TAFE's emphasised their capacity to improve access for disadvantaged and non-traditional students in their submissions to the Review of Australian Higher Education.¹ Several also argued that they are better placed to provide seamless pathways for students to higher education qualifications and that this is needed because universities have so far failed to provide the necessary levels of access. This is said to be either as a consequence of universities' institutional priorities or as a consequence of lack of support in government policy and funding (or both).

The second rationale for the development of mixed-sector institutions is that their higher education provision is putatively more vocationally oriented than that of universities. Submissions to the Review of Australian Higher Education by mixed-sector TAFE's emphasise their capacity to develop applied degrees that are more responsive to industry's needs than university degrees. In its submission to the Review of Australian Higher Education, Holmesglen Institute of TAFE (2008, p.13) argued for a new curriculum underpinned by 'an evidence-based industry-focused applied learning methodology', while Box Hill TAFE (2008, p.6) argued for 'a more industry driven and applied curriculum to meet the needs for a skilled workforce, with industry internships and projects forming an important part of the applied degree structure.' Levin (2004, p.4) explains that in the United States, 'the new community college baccalaureate has a primarily applied and workplace focus, and thus is viewed as the vehicle by which to satisfy the demands of the political economy as well as the needs of the local community.' Foundation degrees in England were explicitly designed as vocationally oriented programs within a broader strategy that designates further education's primary purpose as the delivery of skills needed for work (Parry, Thompson & Blackie 2006, pp.21-22).

Mixed-sector identities

The position of mixed-sector institutions within tertiary education systems shapes the development of institutional, staff and student identities through a relational process. Recently, researchers in England have used the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of 'field' and 'habitus' to understand the way in which learning cultures develop in further education colleges (Hodkinson, Biesta & James 2007; Postlethwaite 2007; Postlethwaite & Maull 2007),² and this has also been used by researchers in the 'further/higher' project (Bathmaker 2008; Bathmaker & Thomas 2007; Smith 2008), which was a large research project that researched the development of mixed-sector institutions in England.³

Bourdieu defines a field 'as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between fields' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.97). Positions in the field are objectively defined by the way it is

¹ See: Box Hill Institute of TAFE (2008), Canberra Institute of Technology (2008), Gordon Institute of TAFE (2008), Holmesglen Institute of TAFE (2008), Swan Institute of TAFE (2008), William Angliss Institute of TAFE (2008).

² See the 'Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education' project funded by the UK Teaching and Learning Research Programme within the Economic & Social Research Council: <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/esrcinfocentre/viewawardpage.aspx?awardnumber=L139251025> accessed 6 February 2009.

³ See <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/furtherhigher/> for research papers from this project (accessed 6 February 2009).

structured and the way power and resources are distributed. There are contests within the field ‘aimed at preserving or transforming the configuration of these forces’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.101). Habitus refers to the dispositions and orientations individuals from similar social groups share as a result of their engagement in similar social, economic and cultural environments. Those who are enculturated in the habitus of a particular field have a ‘practical sense’ or ‘sense of the game’ so they can understand and creatively use the field’s implicit rules and assumptions (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, pp.120-121). This, for example, helps to explain the feeling of ‘not belonging’ experienced by many working class students who are the first in their family to attend university (Crozier, Reay, Clayton *et al.* 2008). Different ‘players’ (institutional and individual) are positioned differently and they come equipped with different levels of status, power, resources, understandings and orientations so that it is not a level playing field. In their research on mixed-sector institutions, Bathmaker and Thomas (2007, p.3) used Reay, David and Ball’s notion of an institutional habitus or culture as part of their analysis:

They use ‘habitus’ to draw attention to how organisational cultures are linked to the wider fields in which institutions operate, whereby an institutional habitus embodies structures in the wider field, but there is also a process of mutual shaping and reshaping – an interplay of structure and agency, but always within the context of the power of the field. One of the things we have found is that ‘hybrid’ institutions do not have only one institutional culture or habitus. Instead there may be a culture that relates to the FE field, and another culture that relates to the HE field.

In analysing the way mixed-sector institutions develop, consequently, it is necessary to understand the nature of the ‘field’ and their position within the field. Trow’s model allows us to analyse the hierarchical structuring of tertiary education and the relationships between the different elements. It is less as a prescriptive description of the sequential development of elite-mass-universal higher education systems because there were many aspects which he didn’t get right (see Scott 2005).⁴ Parry (2008: 9) argues that the value of Trow’s model is that it ‘generates comparative and analytical questions about the division of labour accomplished between and within institutions in national and regional systems.’ So rather than a universal system that subsumes all that went before, it is more accurate, as Bathmaker and Thomas (2007, p.2) argue, to see ‘the current system as an elite, mass and universal system all at the same time, with different parts of the system functioning in different ways.’ Trow (2005, p.36) makes this point when he says:

the evidence suggests that each phase survives in some institutions and in parts of others, while the system as a whole evolves to carry the larger numbers of students and the broader, more diverse functions of the next phase.

⁴ Trow’s model has been criticised because it didn’t adequately describe the ‘tracked’ systems of tertiary education in Europe, and he anticipated that it would take longer to develop a mass and then universal system of higher education in countries such as England. He thought that England would need to expand provision of higher education in further education colleges if they were to develop a mass and then universal system because of the scale of investment that would be needed and because it would be cheaper to sustain. Parry (2008, p.9) explains that England moved to a mass higher education system much more quickly than Trow anticipated, and that it did so through expanding provision first in higher education institutions and universities, and then through the unified system of universities following the removal of the binary divide in 1992. Moreover, the expansion of higher education took place at the same time that the sectoral divide between higher education and further education in England was reinforced. Teichler (2008, p.354) argues that Trow’s concept of elite-mass-universal systems of higher education:

‘...was often misunderstood as characterising the different historical stages of the overall higher education system; in reality however, it refers to a growing number of sectors of the higher education system: *elite higher education* is supplemented in the process of expansion by *mass higher education* and later additionally by *universal higher education*. Thereby, the division between the sectors correspond—as a rule, but not necessarily—to an institutional division within the higher education system.’

Universal systems of tertiary education are not homogenous and they contain elite, mass and universal components. Sometimes this may characterise different components of the one institution (for example, an elite medical school situated within a middle aged, middle ranking, middle status university born during the phase of 'mass' education), but broadly speaking it reflects different types of institutions and the status hierarchies that differentiate them. In Anglophone countries the field is structured through educational policies designed to construct a competitive market. The market is characterised by competition between universities for status, prestige and resource levels. It is also characterised by competition between students for access to positional goods (social position, status, power, and jobs) (Hirsch, 1976), and students compete for the limited supply of high-status goods at high-status universities (Marginson 1997). This competition structures relations within sectors of tertiary education and between sectors of tertiary education, so that the status of higher education is above further education or TAFE, and higher education is hierarchically structured so that the elite universities are positioned at the top.

Labaree (2006, p.6), in discussing the United States, says that the 'stratified structure of higher education arose in a dynamic market system, in which the institutional actors had to operate according to four basic rules.' These rules seem apt for other Anglophone systems as well. They are:

Rule One: Age trumps youth... (Labaree 2006, p.6)

Labaree explains that the old universities have established resources and reputations and they are enmeshed in social elites through their established role in training the country's leaders (Labaree 2006: 6).

Rule Two: Rewards go to those at the top of the system. This means that every institution below the top tier has a strong incentive to move up the ladder. It also means that top institutions have a strong incentive to fend off competitors and preserve their advantage...

Rule Three: It pays to imitate your betters. This means: the way to get ahead is to adopt the behaviors of those above you...

Rule Four: At a certain point, it is more prudent to expand the system by creating new schools rather than increasing enrollments at existing schools. Periodically new waves of educational consumers push for access to higher education, but it is not in the interest of existing institutions to provide such access. (Labaree 2006, pp.6-7)

Bathmaker and Thomas (2007, p.2) situate the English mixed-economy or dual-sector institutions within the 'universal' component of the system because of the range of qualifications they offer, and because of their location in the higher education status hierarchy. Similarly, we can see that mixed-sector colleges in Australia are part of the universal component of the tertiary education system, and that Trow's description of the nature of the institution, learners and curriculum in universal systems is particularly apt in describing what they are and what they do.

This is the framework for understanding where the mixed-sector institutions stand relationally within tertiary education, and for analysing the way learning cultures develop within those institutions. Learning cultures are shaped through interaction of all elements in the field: tertiary education policies; competition; sectoral designation; institutional cultures; teacher identities and practices; and student dispositions, orientations and levels of cultural capital. This relational analysis will be used to examine the shaping of institutional, staff and student identities in the sections that follow.

Institutional identities

Further education colleges teach around one in nine under-graduate higher education students in England although most of this provision is concentrated in a small number of colleges (Parry

2008, p.8). However, while this is a significant component of higher education provision, it still a small part of further education's total provision which is focussed on the 'skills agenda' and upgrading the skills of those who have limited or no formal qualifications (Scott 2008, p.49). Further education colleges are part of broader learning and skills sector in the same way that TAFE institutions are part of a broader VET sector in Australia. Each sector has different funding, regulatory, quality assurance and reporting arrangements and Parry (2008, p.32) argues that these arrangements 'contain and control the movement of institutions between sectors, and set its direction.' He argues that this 'non-alignment has slowed or prevented progress on the introduction of overarching frameworks, such as for qualifications and – most difficult of all – for credits' (Parry 2008, p.32). These arguments are very familiar to those involved in trying to negotiate pathways and credit transfer agreements between VET and higher education in Australia, and it is a particular issue for the dual-sector universities which have long argued that the different sectoral arrangements are an unreasonable burden on the university and that these arrangements inhibit the development of further sectoral collaboration (Wheelahlan 2000). As we found in our research for this project, it is also becoming an issue for the mixed-sector TAFEs.

The decision to develop higher education provision in further education was not made within the further education sector, but was as a consequence of the 1996 Dearing Review into higher education. Parry (2005a, p.13) argues that this 'was yet another example of policy and purpose being made for further education by an external body or party, in this case the higher education sector.' This has resonances in Australia, where the Bradley Review of Higher Education has made recommendations which have far-reaching consequences for VET.

Scott (2008, p.46) argues that different organisational cultures is a factor that contributes to sectoral divergence rather than convergence. He argues that the institutional culture of universities – including the new universities – operates according to quasi-collegiate norms while the further education sector has 'more whole-heartedly embraced a quasi-commercial "corporate" culture.' This is reflected in the governance arrangements of each. Consequently, the provision of higher education in further education has been controversial because there are arguments about the extent to which further education can provide students with a higher education 'experience' as well as ensuring they meet higher education standards. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (2003b, p.2) says that:

...the development and growth of HE in FE has been controversial. Concern has been expressed about the quality (perceived and real) of the FE pathway through higher education, but this has largely ignored the rich and complex picture which is now emerging of excellent practice and a high level of professional commitment.

Parry (2005b, p.79) explains that there were low levels of trust between the Blair government and the further education sector, and this contributed to concerns about quality of its provision – not just of higher education, but also of further education. This meant that 'no one sector was prepared to take ownership and leadership of further education college based higher education provision' (Parry 2005b, p.79). Colleges were open to high levels of scrutiny of their higher education provision. Scott (2008, p.45) says that 'Although the quality assurance of higher education courses in further education has been managed according to higher education "rules", these "rules" have typically been more rigorously applied (with the result that almost the only institutions which have failed to meet the standards established by the – higher education – Quality Assurance Agency have been further education colleges).'

There is also a tension between difference and similarity in the type of higher education provision that is offered in further education so that it can be distinguished from yet be seen as equivalent to provision in universities. Colleges promote the relevance of their qualifications to work, but they must also ensure that they engage students in higher conceptual learning appropriate for higher education. Until recently further education colleges have not had the power to award their own higher education qualifications – only higher education colleges and universities could award

higher education qualifications and further education colleges delivered higher education institutions' qualifications with delegated authority from an institution by an arrangement known as 'franchising'. Colleges now can apply for authority to issue their own foundation degrees provided they meet quality assurance standards; however no college has yet been awarded this power. The Mixed Economy Group (2008, introduction, p.2), which is a group representing 29 large mixed sector colleges in England, are using this new capacity to differentiate their provision of higher education from that of universities, by defining their provision as vocational higher education.

This frees colleges from a number of University-imposed constraints and in particular enables them to deal with employer demands for higher-level training with greater immediacy. Post-secondary vocational education and training is traditionally regarded as the specialism of colleges and the new legislation now extends this remit into vocational higher education.

The problem with the old arrangements was that:

In the opinion of many colleges, progress towards a more skills-oriented curriculum has been impeded by the more traditional academic approach taken by validating institutions. As a result, many programmes continue to contain academic content which has little direct relevance to the work role of the student or the skills required by the employer (Mixed Economy Group 2008, section 2, p.2).

The tension between difference and similarity is also expressed in the way programs are delivered. On the one hand, colleges say that their provision of higher education is distinguished by their further education ethos which includes high levels of pastoral care, smaller classes, more student focused and practice-oriented pedagogy, but on the other, they must ensure that students become independent learners characteristic of higher education and that they develop the knowledge and skills associated with being a graduate from higher education. Parry, Davies and Williams (2003, p.14) found that these differences in further education colleges' higher education provision, while they exist on some dimensions, are not as great as is sometimes claimed: 'A ... compelling... conclusion of this study is the fragility of many of the claims to difference and distinctiveness.'

The pressure to ensure that further education colleges offer students a 'higher education experience' and that they meet appropriate academic standards leads to pressures towards differentiation of higher education and further education provision within colleges. In a review of higher education in further education colleges, the English Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2006) said that: 'The development of an HE-specific teaching and learning strategy, informed by current professional practice, can be an important first step for these colleges.' While reporting that generally speaking, further education colleges were doing a good job, the Quality Assurance Agency (2006) said that:

Colleges have a major challenge to raise the profile and understanding of HE internally and to ensure greater staff and student awareness of the demands of HE study. Many colleges have sought to develop a clear HE strategy, often reflected in the appointment of key staff and sometimes in the demarcation of designated areas for HE teaching and social accommodation.

This contributes towards pressures that help shape perceptions of teachers and students about the need to differentiate higher education provision from further education provision (Parry 2008, p.34), but this takes place within an institution that characterises itself as a further education college. Parry (2008, p.34) explains that:

it was at the senior management levels that the scale of the higher education activity relative to the 'core business' of the college was of major significance. Even where the higher level work was sizable, it might not feature fully or centrally in the strategic planning and

management of the institution. This was particularly evident where higher education programmes were dispersed across the college, with no one person or part of the college responsible for their coordination. This had implications for the capacity of colleges to deal with the different funding, quality and reporting requirements of higher education, especially if this involved plural funding arrangements and multiple franchise partnerships.

Parry (2008, p.33) explains that the Higher Education Funding Council for England undertook a review of higher education in further education colleges in 2006 with the result that England is now developing a new quality assurance review method for further education colleges and a funding and policy framework that will support this provision. The likely consequence is that colleges with substantial higher education provision will be able to demonstrate they meet the criteria for providing higher education, while some of the colleges with small amounts of provision will be less likely to be able to do so, 'leading to their likely withdrawal from higher level work' (Parry 2008, p.33). The government is seeking to develop 'higher education centres' in areas where there is not strong local provision to 'unlock the potential of towns and people' and 'drive economic regeneration' (HECFE 2008, p.5). It is expected that further education colleges, particularly the mixed economy colleges, will play an important part in these higher education centres (Parry 2008, p.33).

Despite the difficulties outlined here, higher education in further education has played an important role in opening access to higher education for disadvantaged students. The report of the Foster Review of Further Education (2005, p.19) explains that further education is the main route to higher education for adults from low socio-economic backgrounds. This is a strength and a weakness; it is a strength because it provides students with opportunities they didn't have before, but it is a weakness because it means that demand for their provision will be fragile and subject to scrutiny because their students do not often have the same levels of preparation as more privileged students in the university system. Scott (2008, pp.54-55) argues that the distinctive contribution made by further education colleges to higher education:

must be described (and so justified) in social, spatial, pedagogical and even intellectual terms – social terms, because there remain important social groups reluctant to access higher education even in the most inclusive post-1992 university; spatial terms, because even in a crowded country like England there will always be higher education 'cold spots' ...; pedagogical terms, because the more intimate scale of HE-in-FE offers possibilities for re-engagement between students and their teachers which are largely unavailable in mass universities; and in intellectual terms, because such re-engagement between students and teachers combined with closer engagement with local communities (defined in cultural as well as economic terms) could provide the basis for new patterns of knowledge production and dissemination very different from the scientific and scholarly paradigms which still hold sway in even the most progressive universities.

Stable or unstable institutional sectoral designations?

It may be however, that the sectoral designation of further education colleges and TAFEs becomes more unclear as their contribution to higher education grows. There is a long tradition, in Australia and overseas, of universities developing (sometimes over centuries) from institutions initially founded as trades schools, schools of mines and industries, technical colleges, colleges of art and design, business colleges, agricultural colleges, horticultural colleges and a variety of occupationally specific post-secondary schools (generically, 'vocational colleges'). Australian examples of universities that originated as vocational colleges include: Charles Darwin University, Curtin University, University of New South Wales, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT, University of South Australia, University of Technology Sydney and Victoria University. Numerous other Australian universities have over time incorporated institutions that originated as vocational colleges. Yet other Australian universities were established as higher education

colleges, typically colleges of advanced education, and were subsequently redesignated universities. This and a variety of other processes of institutional upgrading are found overseas. This process is often known as academic drift and has been studied extensively (Riesman 1956, Burgess 1972, Pratt and Burgess 1974, Neave 1979, Berdahl 1985, Morphew and Huisman 2002).

During the course of this study we found several vocational institutions that had recently started offering baccalaureates and had even more recently been designated as a higher education institution or a university. Thus the New Zealand Unitec Institute of Technology, which was founded as the Carrington Technical Institute in 1976, was upgraded to a polytechnic in 1987 and sought designation as a university in 1996. In this it is seeking to follow Auckland University of Technology which was founded as the Auckland Technical School in 1895 and was redesignated a university in 2000 (Webster 2009, p.121). In England, Smith (2008, p.29) undertook a case study of a further education college that moved from the further education to higher education sector in about 2003 and noted that this was just one example of several further education colleges in various types of transition.

In British Columbia the three community colleges that were granted the right to award degrees in 1989 were designated university colleges and two more community colleges were designated university colleges from 1990 and 1995 (Flemming and Lee 2009, p.102). Flemming and Lee (2009, p.98) argue that 'the creation of the university colleges without engaging in thorough deliberation on their role within the post-secondary system resulted in a certain ambiguity of purpose and identity within the institutions and their communities'. Levin (2004) observed that British Columbia's university colleges changed their structures and practices to emulate research intensive universities. For whatever reason, British Columbia's institution of university colleges has been transitory. By September 2008 all five university colleges had become universities, one by restructure, one by amalgamation and the others by redesignation.

In Australia, two of the ten TAFEs that offer higher education have had their names formally changed to Institutes of Technology rather than Institutes of TAFE. Four have dropped the word 'TAFE' from their web homepage and they describe themselves in various ways. Two say they are institutes, one uses only its initials as its 'branding' (similar to RMIT), and the other dispenses with 'institute of TAFE' and says that it is that city's 'leading provider of vocational and higher education'. Of the remaining four, three clearly and obviously position 'TAFE' on their webpage, and one does so in tiny text. Two TAFEs argued in their submissions to the Review of Australian Higher Education that a new type of institution be designated that potentially encompasses senior secondary school, VET and higher education up to Masters degree, and they gave these institutions the title 'polytechnic' or 'university college' (Box Hill Institute of TAFE 2008, Holmesglen Institute of TAFE 2008). The literature and the positioning strategies of Australian TAFEs that offer higher education suggest that 'mixed sector' institutions may be a point in a transition to a stronger sectoral identity. It also has significant impact on the identities of those who teach in these institutions.

Teacher identities

The interplay of sectoral relations and policies and institutional identities and priorities contributes to shaping teacher identities within mixed-sector institutions. Sectoral policy frameworks and institutional cultures interact with teachers' habitus as they work at positioning themselves within this broader environment. Learning cultures are the outcome of teachers' own priorities, understandings and practices that are enabled or constrained by the broader context in which they find themselves (Hodkinson, Anderson, Colley *et al.* 2007; Postlethwaite 2007).

Teaching higher education in further education colleges offers teachers possibilities as well as constraints as a consequence of their sectoral location, and this contributes to shaping their

perceptions of their role. In a small institutional study in a further education college that had a small amount of higher education provision, Young (2002, p.280) found that 'staff were overwhelmingly enthusiastic about their work and had felt they had benefited greatly from the opportunity to teach on the degree.' Their 'Commitment and motivation were sustained by a perception of benefits in terms of personal and academic development' (Young 2002, p.274). She said that teachers would 'acutely feel the loss of this work' if the college were to stop offering higher education programs (Young 2002, p.280).

Teachers defined their work as different to teaching in universities because their identities were more strongly associated with teaching than with the traditional academic orientation to subject based disciplines, and because of the nature of the pedagogic practices they could engage in (Young 2002, p.274). Classes were smaller than in universities, relations between staff and students were more intimate and collaborative and staff could be more flexible in their approach. This is quite different to universities 'where large student groups and research commitments of staff create greater levels of anonymity and the need for increased independence in learning' (Young 2002, p.280). Two larger studies provide evidence for Young's findings. Burkill, Rodway and Dyer (2008, p.329) found that 'HE in FE teachers operate in a context which, despite some external constraints, gives them considerable flexibility in the choice of teaching approaches even when these are defined as lectures.' Harwood and Harwood (2004, p.162) found that teachers 'revealed a high level of commitment to their students' learning and intellectual development.' Teachers enjoyed the ability to engage more deeply with subjects in their teaching areas which included being able to engage with theoretical frameworks in their field, and they enjoyed the greater freedom they had in constructing curriculum compared to other types of programs in further education (Young 2002, pp.279-280).

Teachers also defined teaching higher education programs as different from teaching further education programs, requiring different pedagogic approaches (Harwood & Harwood 2004, p.161; Young 2002, p.278). This was a benefit for the reasons discussed above, but it also caused difficulties. Those who had to teach across both further and higher education found it difficult to 'switch registers and levels' when moving from one to the other. Young (2002, p.278) says that 'Staff saw the issue in terms of the adjustments they had to make in their own thinking, and in the way they communicated with their students.' This was not just to do with intellectual content and the level of preparation that was required although these issues are very important, students in further education programs tended to be younger than those in higher education programs and Young (2002, p.279) says that some of the difficulty may be related to the difference between teaching younger and older students.

There were, however, difficulties in addition to those associated with 'switching registers and levels' between teaching in further and higher education. Young (2002, p.283) argues that the culture of further education is managerialist and anti-academic and Harwood and Harwood (2004, p.162) found difficulties arose for teachers with trying to fit a higher education culture into a further education culture. This was compounded by teachers' sense of isolation within the college (Young 2002). Workload was a major problem because in many cases teachers are teaching higher education while on a further education industrial award with the result that they had to teach sometimes well in excess of 20 hours a week. This was the case even though preparing higher education classes took much more time because of the complexity and depth required, but also because teachers had an obligation to stay abreast of their subject.

A HECFE (2003b, p.10) report found that even where colleges tried to compensate for the extra demands on teachers' time that 'the resulting teaching load would still appear dauntingly high' to someone from a higher education institution. Teaching loads are thus related to the quality of provision but they are also related to staff development because, among other things, teachers often needed to upgrade their qualifications to ensure that staff teaching higher education were

appropriately qualified. The HECFE (2003b, p.10) report says that the ‘extent to which necessary staff development can be combined with this [teaching] commitment is seen as a crucial issue.’

The findings were similar in research on United States community colleges that now offer baccalaureate degrees as well as their traditional two year associate degrees. Hrabak (2009) undertook a review of PhD studies that focused on the ‘community college baccalaureate movement’. It may be expected that teaching staff would not require additional support seeing their associate degree programs were, by and large, the first two years of the four year degree, but this was not the case. Hrabak (2009, p.209) cites one PhD that focused on ‘the development and needs that might change with the shift to upper-division coursework’. The findings were that:

Although it might appear that faculty do not require any extra training or support as their schools transition from lower-division coursework to offering upper-division coursework, Ross reports that the faculty called for some definite changes. The changes included time to prepare their courses in terms of course development, grading, and collaboration with colleagues inside and outside of the school. In addition to these changes, the faculty said they needed access to more resources in terms of library holdings, technology, and increased access to professional development opportunities through workshops and conferences nationwide. Overall, the transformation from two-year community college to one offering upper division coursework and conferring bachelor’s degrees requires an overhaul of many of the support features and resources allotted to faculty members. These changes take time and money to make a reality, and from the results, faculty members need this extra support prior to the offering of the courses and degrees. (Hrabak 2009, p.209)

The problem of workloads and the need for staff development are consistent themes, and they are related to the complex and difficult question of scholarship. Higher education teaching staff in further education colleges emphasise the importance of scholarship to their teaching (Young 2002; HECFE 2003b; Harwood & Harwood 2004; Minty 2007; Burkill, Rodway Dyer & Stone 2008), and indeed this was a key point raised by TAFE teachers we interviewed for this project. Teachers said that they did not have time to undertake the necessary scholarship, and nor did they have time to undertake research even though many said they would like to do so. Parry (2008, p. 25) explains that colleges varied in the arrangements that they made for scholarly activity.

Arrangements varied college by college as to how much time and support was given for scholarly activity, with managers conscious of the potential for resentment from those who compared their situation with staff in higher education institutions and from those who, because they taught only further education courses, did not qualify for these entitlements.

Notions about scholarship are also contested and defined in a wide variety of ways (HECFE 2003b, p.11). Harwood and Harwood (2004, p.154) cite a 1993 English Higher Education Quality Council report which expressed concern about the level of scholarship in further education because FE teachers were traditionally interpreters of their subjects rather than originators of knowledge within the subject. However, HECFE (2003b, p.11) distinguished between scholarship and research in arguing that:

There is an important distinction to be drawn between the cultivation of a general research culture in FE, and scholarly activity which has a clear subject focus. The former is reflected in a range of activities, many supported by development funding.

Later in that report, HECFE argues that the necessary connection between research and scholarly teaching in higher education has not been demonstrated, and that it is unlikely that further education colleges will access the resources they need to establish a research culture. However, it says:

But the absence of a vibrant research cultures with FECS may be viewed as a relatively minor issue. Meta-analyses show that it is by no means clear that research is generally

central to teaching quality, and a more research-led approach to teaching may be developed without direct involvement in research. (HECFE 2003b, p.18)

If this is indeed the case, and research is not intrinsic to teaching higher education in further education/VET, it nonetheless highlights the importance of scholarship and time for teachers to engage in scholarship. The key lesson from the literature is that staff development and time for scholarship is fundamental to ensuring the quality of higher education in community colleges, further education and TAFE.

Building capacity for scholarship in further education/TAFE requires attention at the institutional level and at the national level. There are helpful examples in England, where HECFE has developed resources to support institutional leaders as well as practitioners (HECFE 2003a), through research projects such as the Further/Higher project, and through the development of higher education learning partnerships such as that at the University of Plymouth which works with over 20 further education colleges in its region to support the development of higher education in these institutions.⁵ Of particular note is the HE in FE Enhancement Programme run through the UK Higher Education Academy. The aims of this programme are:

Facilitating increased levels of coherence and communication within the HE in FE sector.

Facilitating increased engagement between the subject centres and HE in FE.

Gathering, developing and disseminating examples of effective practice of teaching, learning and assessment within HE in FE.

Supporting scholarly activity and continuous professional development for practitioners of HE in further education colleges.⁶

One of the roles of the Higher Education Academy is to support the development of subject-specific disciplines within higher education as a whole, and the development of subject-specific support for higher education teachers in further education colleges is emphasised (HECFE 2003b, p.12).⁷ There are 11 subject centres and most have a dedicated FE in HE page and resources, while others have HE in FE resources that can be located through searching the site. The subject centres are:

- ✧ Art Design Media
- ✧ Bioscience
- ✧ Business Management Accountancy and Finance (BMAF)
- ✧ Centre for Education in the Built Environment (CEBE)
- ✧ Education (ESCalate)
- ✧ English
- ✧ Engineering
- ✧ Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism

⁵ See the University of Plymouth Colleges Faculty network – it is supported by the Higher Education Learning Partnerships and the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: <http://www.help-cetl.ac.uk/index.php?p=1> accessed 11 February 2009.

⁶ See the HE in FE programme in the Higher Education Academy at this address: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/institutions/heinfe> accessed 11 February 2009.

⁷ FE in HE resources in subject Centres in the UK Higher Education Academy <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/institutions/heinfe/scwork> accessed 11 February 2009.

- ✧ Information & Computer Sciences
- ✧ Performing Arts Learning and Teaching Innovation Network (PALATINE)
- ✧ Social Work and Social Policy (SWAP).

While not a panacea, such a strategy has the potential to map HE in FE into higher education overall and help to ensure the standards and quality of this provision. This is possible because further education colleges have an explicit public policy role in delivering higher education in England. If Australia seeks to expand participation in higher education through non-university providers then there is a similar obligation to support staff development and curriculum development based on the scholarship of teaching. It may be useful to consider what role the Australian Learning and Teaching Council can play in supporting the development of higher education in TAFE.

Student identities

Students' identities as higher education students are shaped by their own dispositions and orientations (their habitus) and the levels of cultural capital they bring with them to education (particularly whether they are the first in their family to go to higher education), as well as the institutional context in which they find themselves (Postlethwaite & Maull 2007; Hodkinson, Anderson, Colley *et al.* 2007; Bathmaker & Thomas 2007). The challenges confronting students from disadvantaged backgrounds in constructing their identities as higher education students differs from those from middle class backgrounds. Crozier, Reay, Clayton *et al.* (2008, p.171) found that middle class students in their study had the benefit of more preparation for university and what to expect compared to working class students, and 'Most had received advice and grooming from their schools or sixth form colleges.' They contrast this with the experience of working class students who often had negative experiences of school and, unlike middle class students, their transition into different and higher levels of education was not taken for granted (see also Bathmaker 2008, p.32). They explain that working class students must make two transitions, one is into higher education and the other is into a more middle class environment where orientations to knowledge and understandings of what it is to be a student are taken for granted, along with a social 'ease' that allows middle class students to use university as an important site for developing their social capital (see also Reay, Crozier & Clayton 2009). Working class students experience higher levels of self-doubt and uncertainty about learning in higher education that often comes from their feeling like a 'fish out of water' in contrast to middle class students who feel like a 'fish in water' (Reay, Crozier & Clayton 2009, Reay 2001). In discussing the UK, Brennan and Osborne explain that when students from low socio-economic backgrounds do go to university, they are more likely to go to the local university, and they are more likely to be older, live at home and work part-time and have complex lives. They generally have less time to spend 'on university activities beyond the immediate requirements of study' (Brennan & Osborne 2008, p.181). In a study of student engagement in Australian universities, Krause (2005, p.11) found that international students, students aged between 20 and 24 years, and students from low socio-economic backgrounds, language backgrounds other than English, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds scored lower on a scale that measured how they felt they were coping at university and how they felt they were comprehending their studies.

There is an important transition in becoming a higher education student. This is not just from further education/VET programs into higher education programs, it is also from short-cycle higher education programs to full degrees. There is extensive evidence that students experience these transitions as difficult, even though they are able to negotiate them. The literature in the United States uses the term 'transfer shock' to describe this process (Laanan 2007). Institutional research in Australia has documented the anxieties and difficulties experienced by students as

they move from VET to higher education programs, yet they still manage to perform at similar levels as other new entrants to higher education (Abbott-Chapman 2006; Cameron 2004; Milne, Glaisher & Keating 2006). There are similar findings of students moving from short-cycle higher education to degrees in the United States and England (Laanan 2007; Falconetti 2009; Greenbank 2007). Students' concerns include academic, social, and cultural transitions that must be negotiated that are often combined with work, family and economic demands.

Educational institutions consequently must respond to students from disadvantaged backgrounds making the transition to higher education by structuring inclusive learning environments that enable them to develop strong identities as higher education students. Identities are built through an understanding of the requirements of studying higher education, a capacity to engage in learning at an appropriate level, confidence that these demands can be met, and by feelings of belonging. Reay, Crozier and Clayton (2009, p.5) argue that the type of higher education institutions that working class students attend 'exerts a powerful influence on how they see themselves and are seen by others in terms of both their learner and class identities.' They explain that strong and powerful processes of institutionalisation 'and the strong academic and social guidance and channelling that underpin them, both cut across and overshadow class differences' (Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2009, p.5).

Institutional contexts for navigating student transitions in the dual-sectors & mixed-sectors

The institutional culture of mixed-sector and dual-sector institutions contributes to shaping students' understandings of the possibilities that are open to them. There seems to be a difference in the literature in England and Australia that reflects the different institutional contexts within the dual-sectors in each country. Bathmaker (2008, p.1) found in her study of dual-sector institutions that 'Being a dual sector FE/HE institution did not currently equate with a drive to promote internal transitions' and that 'the opportunity to progress from FE to HE within one institution is not as yet an established expectation amongst staff and students even within such institutions'.

In contrast, the dual-sector universities in Australia have, in recent years, emphasised their dual-sector character and used the notion of pathways and student articulation to position their university. The result is that students admitted on the basis of their prior TAFE studies to the five dual-sector universities in Australia rose from 9% in 2000 to 18% in 2007. Two universities – Swinburne University of Technology and RMIT – admitted 27% and 19% of higher education students in 2007 respectively on the basis of prior TAFE studies (Wheelahan 2009b, p.18). Students' awareness of these pathways has grown. At another dual-sector university, Milne, Keating and Shay (2006, p.2) interviewed 114 TAFE students who were planning to articulate to a higher education program at end of their TAFE course. Most enrolled in TAFE programs with the express intention of articulating to higher education. However, around one third made their decision 'in the final year, or even weeks, of their TAFE course' (Milne, Keating & Holden 2006, p.2). They also interviewed TAFE teachers in the university who estimated that 'demand' for articulation by students within their courses ranged from 10% to 90%, depending on the field of study. A large majority of TAFE students who were interested in articulating and who had applied to higher education were successful, with most applying to and going to that dual-sector university (Milne, Glaisher & Keating 2006, p.3).

In another paper, Milne, Keating and Holden (2006, p.7) found that the success or otherwise of student articulation from TAFE to higher education depends on the nature of the relationship between staff in the two sectors: collaborative relationships lead to good outcomes, whereas adversarial relationships generally lead to negative outcomes. They say that:

Critically, both personal and organisational relationships between staff in each sector affected the quality of information exchanged between the sectors and thereby passed on to students. (Milne, Keating & Holden 2006, p.7)

At the same university, Woodley, Henderson, De Sensi *et al.* (2005) found that in some fields of education, higher education selection officers would choose TAFE articulators from within the university only as a last resort, whereas in others there was a high level of student articulation because of good relations between staff across the sectors, with the consequence that TAFE students were welcomed in higher education. This shows that cultures are not homogenous within institutions. It also shows that while institutional policies to support student progression are important, it is equally important to invest resources to help teaching staff from the two sectors develop relationships of co-operation and trust. Such an institutional investment will not guarantee that good relationships develop, but they are not likely to develop in their absence (Wheelahlan 2000, 2009a).

It seems that the emphasis by Australian dual-sector universities on their dual-sector character results in those universities seeking to develop institutional policies that transcend the sectors (with varying levels of success), even while teaching and programs remain sectorally differentiated. For example, several dual-sector universities have replaced their separate higher education and TAFE academic boards with one academic board for provision in both sectors. The success or otherwise of the dual-sectors in trying to 'build bridges' between the sectors is contested, fluid and controversial and will continue to be so given their location within both the VET and higher education sectors and the need to constantly renegotiate sectoral boundaries within the one institution.

In contrast, the dual-sector/mixed-sector institutions in the Further/Higher project in England seem to be concerned with engendering a higher education 'ethos', student learning experience and culture that is distinguished from the further education culture and practices (Bathmaker 2008; Bathmaker & Thomas 2007; Burns 2007) and the need to do so was a feature of HECFE (2003a; 2003b) reports. Our findings from this research are that the development of higher education in TAFE seems to be about emphasising the difference between VET and higher education provision, and there are similar concerns about the nature of the student learning experience and ensuring high academic standards.

Boundary crossing & students' experience of transitions

In both the dual-sector universities and in the mixed-sector institutions, engagement between the sectors is at the 'boundaries' where the transition from further education/TAFE to higher education takes place, and then to different kinds of higher education. It may be that negotiating these boundaries is an important part of creating opportunities for students through helping to construct their identity as a higher education student (Burns 2007; Goodlad & Thompson 2007). Michael Young (2006, p.3) argues that:

Both the terms 'further' and 'higher' and the distinction between them not only distinguish types of programme and institution — they also carry out what might be referred to as ideological and 'identity' work; they sustain identities and boundaries for both students and teachers and at the same time limit as well as enhance people's expectations and possibilities.

Boundaries are not always negative; they can enable as well as constrain (Bernstein 2000). Young (2006, p.3) argues that 'Without a sense of identity provided by the limits of boundaries, a learner loses the cultural resources that are needed to test new concepts and understandings against old — the very essence of learning.' So mechanisms for transcending the sectoral divide in the dual-sector universities can be regarded as explicit mechanisms to support students to make the

transition to higher education (even if this is always a work in progress). So too can the notion of establishing boundaries between further education/VET and higher education within mixed-sector institutions be a way of helping students make the transition to becoming a higher education student. This can be particularly important for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and can be one of the key contributions made by higher education provision in TAFE.

While boundaries can be enabling, they can also contribute to reproducing sectoral hierarchies and distinctions, which in turn can have implications for student progression and student outcomes. Bathmaker (2008, p.9) uses the concept of 'cooling out', first advanced by Burton Clarke in 1960 in the United States to refer to the argument that community colleges may shift students' focus to lower status outcomes rather than serve as a bridge to higher levels of education. Bathmaker (2008, p.9) found evidence both of 'cooling out', but also of 'warming up' in her institutional case studies. Grubb (2006, p.33) similarly uses the notion of 'heating up' to say that community colleges in the United States can also expand the range of opportunities open to students.

Bathmaker (2008, p.32) found that students in the English dual-sectors relied to a great extent on their teachers' advice about their future study options, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They relied on their teachers' advice not just on the available options; it also included shaping students' perceptions of their own options within the range of possibilities that may be available. Institutional research in Australia has found similar outcomes (Wheelerhan 2001). Bathmaker found that, in many cases, students who were regarded as academically able were encouraged to transfer out of the dual-sector institution to another, higher status institution, in some cases even when there was appropriate provision was available within the initial institution. Students' access to and success in these higher status programs increase the status of the sending program, which in turn contributes to the sectoral positioning of the sending program within the institution. There were exceptions to this, and one was a specialist vocational area where the institution was held in high regard in the industry, and it was this that mattered to students. This specialist area also had good relations between staff teaching across the programs, with some teaching across both (Bathmaker 2008, p.16).

However, Bathmaker argues that sometimes 'transferring out' of the initial institution was an important part of negotiating the boundary between further education and higher education and part of challenging students' comfort zones and extending their horizons. In this case it may be that navigating the geographic boundary in moving institutions is part of navigating social and cognitive boundaries in the transition to degree level studies (Bathmaker 2008, p.134; Burns 2007). The way in which this is 'managed' may contribute to opening opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds or reinforcing patterns of disadvantage. Students may not be encouraged to engage these boundaries if they are deemed to be 'weaker' or less academically able students, and traditionally such students are more likely to come from disadvantaged backgrounds. This can contribute to their developing perceptions of their study options which may leave them within an institutional context in which they are not extended even if they have moved to a higher level of study, because they are not challenged to move beyond their comfort zone of the familiar. Remaining within their geographic boundaries may make it more difficult to engage with social and cognitive boundaries. This may be appropriate, but the cost may also be that students are not able to follow opportunities that could be available to them and this is particularly problematic if their aspirations have been 'cooled' as a result of their educational experiences.

Those who have been involved in supporting student transitions from VET to higher education have emphasised the need for seamlessness between the sectors. This remains an important institutional and broader policy objective to ensure students are encouraged to continue studying, and also to ensure that administrative difficulties are not placed in their path. Implementing such

arrangements requires high levels of co-operation and trust among staff in both sectors as well as appropriate policies. However, rather than regarding boundaries as always being obstacles it may be useful to explicitly acknowledge their existence and to consider the arrangements that are needed to support students in making the transition to higher level studies, so that, for example, transition programs acknowledge the academic challenges students will face and help them prepare for those. In mixed-sector TAFEs which are beginning to develop higher education provision it may be appropriate to distinguish higher education provision from VET provision as a way of providing students with opportunities to negotiate the boundaries between the two.

Conclusion

The evidence from the literature is that boundaries will inevitably be constructed as mixed-sector TAFEs develop their higher education provision. In part, this process is as a consequence of having two tertiary education sectors that report to different levels of government, and education policies that distinguish between the sectors and insist on different curriculum, funding, reporting, quality assurance and administrative arrangements. As with the dual-sector universities, this will make it more difficult than it could be for the mixed-sector TAFEs to develop their 'dual-sector' provision because these arrangements will always pull VET and higher education in different directions. Boundaries will also arise as a consequence of the sectoral location of mixed-sector TAFEs, and we risk constructing large mixed-sector TAFEs that are lower in status than the 'new' universities thus reinforcing the stratification of tertiary education in Australia. As with the dual-sector universities, sectoral hierarchies may also develop within mixed-sector TAFEs as their provision of higher education grows. Mixed-sector TAFEs may also be questioned about the quality of their provision because of their sectoral location, the fact that they do not conduct research and as a consequence of their more vocationally focussed provision that is more explicitly designed to be industry 'relevant'. Questions will be asked about the extent to which it is possible for students to have a higher education experience in TAFE, and also about the academic independence of programs that have tight ties to industry. They will also be subjected to high levels of scrutiny because their students are more likely to need high levels of academic support, particularly if they come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Their staff are not likely to have the same level of research higher degree qualifications, and they will tend to have higher teaching loads which will also lead to questions about the quality of provision.

Bathmaker *et al.* (2008, p.133) point out that further education colleges are in a dependent and difficult position because they are teaching only institutions that rely on universities to validate (and sometimes fund) their qualifications. It is different in Australia because TAFE institutes must be registered as a higher education institution with their state government higher education registering body and they must get all of their programs accredited through this body. They are thus not in the same dependent relationship as further education colleges in England, but nor do they have the same independence as universities which have the authority to accredit their own qualifications. They are indirectly beholden to universities because they must prove that their qualifications are at the same standard as similar qualifications in universities. Ironically, they are under more pressure to prove that the academic standards of their qualifications are at a higher education 'level'. This may be positive and help ensure students have access to provision that is at the same standard, but it also pressures TAFEs to emulate universities and thus result in provision that is 'more of the same' rather than different. It is important to emphasise that this is not necessarily negative – it may contribute to ensuring the standing of Australia's higher education overall.

While the development of higher education in TAFE will be controversial and difficulties will arise, Bathmaker *et al.* (2008, p.133) also point out that new opportunities are created as a consequence of the development of dual-sector institutions in that country. They say that it has contributed to making the boundaries between the sectors more permeable and workable. This

has the potential to open opportunities for students, particularly those who have not had high levels of access to higher education. This potential exists in Australia as well. The fluid nature of the boundaries between VET and higher education combined with more competition between providers in both sectors mean that higher education in TAFE will grow, even if government does not explicitly support this as an important role for TAFE. There is a danger that if this happens this provision will not be regarded as at the same standard as higher education in universities, and as a consequence it may circumscribe students' opportunities, particularly for students from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Arguably, if the development of higher education in TAFE is to fulfil its potential, it requires support at national and institutional levels so that resources are made available and conducive policies and institutional frameworks are constructed. This may include consideration of:

- ✧ public funding for higher education provision in TAFEs and a place in public policy of TAFE's role in delivering higher education. TAFEs have a community service obligation in their VET provision which does not disappear with their higher education provision, and they particularly emphasise the role they can play in supporting disadvantaged students to access higher education. Public funding and a role in higher education policy for TAFE will make it possible for TAFEs to be included in higher education equity strategies and also to be held accountable for their outcomes. It will also help individual TAFEs to develop sufficient levels of provision to ensure that they are able to offer students a higher education experience in their studies;
- ✧ an 'enrolment loading' for TAFEs that enrol students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their higher education programs. The government is allocating universities an enrolment loading 'as a financial incentive to expand their enrolment of low SES students, and to fund the intensive support needed to improve their completion and retention rates' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009: 14). This should also be made available to TAFEs that offer higher education provision because they are more likely to have to support students who are even more disadvantaged than those in the 'new' and regional universities that already have a high percentage of disadvantaged students;
- ✧ consideration of an optimal sectoral mix of provision within mixed-sector TAFEs. TAFEs that offer close to the 20% threshold of higher education provision and thus qualify as a dual-sector will be more able to develop and invest the resources that are needed to ensure the quality of that provision. If the level of provision remains marginal, its quality will be questioned;
- ✧ the development of consistent jurisdictional, governance, quality assurance and funding arrangements for tertiary education. These are key recommendations in the Review of Australian Higher Education and if implemented will help contribute to more consistent arrangements across the sectors, and will help to reduce inexorable pressures for administrative and organisational separation of higher education and VET provision within mixed-sector TAFEs;
- ✧ support for staff development and curriculum development within TAFEs. Each sector has national policies and frameworks to support the development of curriculum and pedagogic practices that will result in quality outcomes. However, there is no framework at the moment for supporting the development of higher education provision outside universities, even though such provision is likely to grow. Individual TAFEs are investing in developing communities of practice around their higher education provision (Renwick & Burrows 2008), and also in supporting their staff to gain higher degree qualifications. It is difficult for TAFEs to support this level of staff development because they are just beginning to develop the institutional capacity that is needed to sustain a vibrant higher education culture. As suggested earlier, it may be useful to consider what role the Australian Learning and Teaching Council can play in supporting the development of higher education in TAFE, and it may be useful to consider funding other partnerships that can develop communities of practice to support TAFE's provision of higher education as exemplified earlier by the University of Plymouth partnership with its regional further education colleges;

- ✧ a tertiary education award for staff working within mixed-sector institutions so that more realistic teaching loads can be negotiated that take account of the additional work required to teach higher education programs, and career pathways for TAFE teachers that enable them to become higher education teachers if they wish to do so. This possibility is not currently open to TAFE teaching staff in the dual-sector universities and if it were it would arguably do much to reduce sectoral tensions. The possibility of more flexible career pathways in mixed-sector TAFEs may help mitigate pressures towards entrenching sectoral distinctions among teaching staff;
- ✧ a realistic understanding by institutional leaders of the challenges teaching staff confront in teaching higher education programs while on TAFE teaching conditions. Quality provision is premised on staff having the time to engage in scholarship. This is one of the strongest themes in the literature and one of the strongest themes to emerge from our interviews with TAFE teaching staff;
- ✧ development of transition programs within TAFEs to support students moving from VET to higher education programs, and transition programs to support students moving from associate degrees in TAFEs to degrees in universities. The extensive literature on transfer shock in the United States shows that this transition is difficult for students even if they are moving from a lower level higher education program to a higher level program, because of the different learning environment, expectations and requirements; and
- ✧ institutional strategies to develop pathways from TAFE's higher education programs to higher education programs in universities, either from associate degrees to degrees, or from degrees to post-graduate qualifications. This will raise the status of TAFE's programs and open new opportunities for students.

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Interview schedules

Title of Project:	Higher Education in TAFEs
Duration:	2008-2009
Funding Body:	National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program
Chief Investigators:	Dr Leesa Wheelahan, Dr Gavin Moodie, Professor Stephen Billett and Dr Ann Kelly

Background to the project:

This project will research the provision of higher education (HE) in TAFE. TAFE institutes now offer full-fee associate degrees and degree programs in five states. This provision is likely to increase as a consequence of Commonwealth and state government policies that encourage diversity and competition among educational providers in both the vocational education and training and higher education sectors. Very little is known about the nature of these programs, how they have been designed and implemented, the purposes they are designed to meet, the impact they are having on partnerships with universities and with industry partners, whether they open opportunities for students, and how they are perceived by participants.

Aims:

This project will research the way in which and the reasons why TAFEs are offering higher education qualifications and the internal governance, institutional, administrative and policy arrangements they have developed to support this provision. It will also investigate how student and staff VET and HE identities are formed and shaped through the provision of HE in TAFE, and the way these boundaries are navigated within TAFE.

Approach:

The data collection for this study will be implemented in two stages, namely through a review of national and international literature and desktop research, and through interviews with:

- ✧ senior managers in TAFEs offering Higher Education courses
- ✧ a combination of teachers in TAFE who: deliver HE courses exclusively; deliver both VET and HE courses; and those who deliver high level VET qualifications exclusively
- ✧ students enrolled in HE courses in TAFEs
- ✧ senior managers in a TAFE that is planning to offer HE courses
- ✧ senior managers in a state in two TAFES not currently offering HE
- ✧ senior managers in a dual-sector university
- ✧ relevant staff in those state Offices of Higher Education.

The team will use the data to further understandings about the nature of these programs, how they have been designed and implemented, the purposes they are designed to meet, the impact they are having on partnerships with universities and with industry partners, whether they open opportunities for students, and how they are perceived by participants. A number of recommendations for the implementation of such programs will be made as a result of the study.

Outcomes:

The results of the study will be distributed in the following ways: a discussion paper; message briefs; a written report to NCVET that will be published on the web and in hard copy, conference papers and one or more articles in peer-reviewed journals. All participants will be advised when the research has been published by NCVET so they can download the report (for free) from the web.

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule B (Directors of HE in TAFE)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About you

- 1.1 Please briefly outline your experience in tertiary education, including that as an educational director
- 1.2 In what ways have you been involved in higher education programs within TAFE?

Section Two: Higher education programs in your institution

- 2.1 What kinds of higher education programs are offered in your institution (e.g. extent and areas)?
- 2.2 What kind of student numbers do you have in these programs (**as an estimate**)?
- 2.3 What plans does your institution have to develop new higher education programs (e.g. extent and areas)?

Section Three: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 3.1. Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 3.2. How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 3.3. How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 3.4. What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 3.5. What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 3.6. What are the limitations of these arrangements?

Section Four: Processes of program development

- 4.1. How have external stakeholders, such as industry and Office of Higher Education, shaped the program objectives, content and assessment practices?
- 4.2. What governance, administrative and quality assurance arrangements has your institution developed to support your higher education provision?
- 4.3. What impact, if any, do the different sectoral funding, reporting, and quality assurance arrangements have on the development of higher education programs in your institution?

Section Five: Program provision

- 5.1. What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 5.2. What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 5.3. What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes?
- 5.4. What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?
- 5.5. What kind of partnerships do you have with universities and how has your institution's provision of higher education affected these partnerships?

Section Six: Likely educational and institution implications

- 6.1. In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 6.2. How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 6.3. What impact will the provision of higher education in TAFE have on the way TAFE students and teachers think about themselves? How will they describe what they do?
- 6.4. What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule C (Program developers)

This interview is part of an NCVET funded project that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About you

- 1.1 Please briefly outline your experience in vocational education, including that as a program developer.
- 1.2 In what ways have you been involved in higher education programs within TAFE?

Section Two: Higher education programs in your institution

- 2.1 What kinds of higher education programs are offered in your institution (e.g. extent and areas)?
- 2.2 What plans does your institution have to develop new higher education programs (e.g. extent and areas)?

Section Three: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 3.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 3.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 3.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 3.4 What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 3.5 What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 3.6 What are the limitations of these arrangements?

Section Four: Processes of program development

- 4.1 In what ways do the AQF levels and descriptors shape higher education programs in TAFE?
- 4.2 How have external stakeholders, such as industry and Office of Higher Education, shaped the program objectives, content and assessment practices?
- 4.3 How have internal stakeholders (i.e. teachers, administrators) shaped the program objectives, content and assessment practices?

Section Five: Program provision

- 5.1 What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 5.2 What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 5.3 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?

Section Six: Likely educational and institution implications

- 6.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 6.2 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 6.3 What are the likely implications for both TAFE students and teachers' identities as educators and learners from higher education within TAFE?
- 6.4 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule D (Teachers)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About you

- 1.1 Please briefly outline your experience as a teacher, including that as a TAFE teacher.
- 1.2 Have you been involved in higher education programs within TAFE, and if so in what ways?
- 1.3 What programs are you teaching in now?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.4 What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.5 What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.6 What are the limitations of these arrangements?

Section Three: Teaching

- 3.1. Is teaching in higher education programs in TAFE different from or similar to teaching other programs in TAFE? In what ways?
- 3.2. In your experience, are students who do higher education programs in TAFE different from or similar to students who do other programs in TAFE? In what ways?
- 3.3. How do students who are doing HE programs see themselves? How do they describe what they do?
- 3.4. How do teachers see themselves? How do they describe what they do?
- 3.5. How do you think teaching higher education in TAFE should be organised and structured? Why?
- 3.6. What are the key challenges for TAFE teachers teaching in higher education programs?
- 3.7. What impact will the provision of higher education in TAFE have on TAFE teaching staff in general?
- 3.8. How do you see your own future as a teacher in TAFE?

Section Four: Program provision

- 4.1. What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 4.2. What kinds of relationships do teachers need to have with external stakeholders to best support higher education in TAFE?
- 4.3. What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 4.4. How can teaching in higher education in TAFE be supported?
- 4.5. What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?

Section Five: Likely educational and institution implications

- 5.1. In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 5.2. How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 5.3. What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule E (Directors of TAFE with HE)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: Higher education programs in your institution

- 1.1 In what ways have you been involved in higher education programs within TAFE?
- 1.2 What types of higher education programs would you like to see developed in your institution? (e.g. extent and areas)?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.4 What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.5 What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.6 What are the limitations of these arrangements?

Section Three: Processes of program development

- 3.1 How have external stakeholders, such as industry and Office of Higher Education, shaped the program objectives, content and assessment practices?
- 3.2 What should be the role of external stakeholders, such as industry and the Office of Higher Education in shaping program objectives, content and assessment practices?
- 3.3 What governance, administrative and quality assurance arrangements has your institution developed to support your higher education provision?
- 3.4 What impact, if any, do the different sectoral funding, reporting, and quality assurance arrangements have on the development of higher education programs in your institution?
- 3.5 Are there any other industrial, governance or broad policy frameworks that either constrain or enable the development of higher education programs in TAFE?

Section Four: Program provision

- 4.1 What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?

- 4.2 What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes?
- 4.3 What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 4.4 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?
- 4.5 What kind of partnerships do you have with universities and how has your institution's provision of higher education affected these partnerships?

Section Five: Likely educational and institution implications

- 5.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 5.2 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 5.3 What impact will the provision of higher education in TAFE have on the way TAFE students and teachers think about themselves? How will they describe what they do?
- 5.4 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule F (Senior staff in TAFE planning to offer HE)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: Higher education programs in your institution

- 1.1 What plans does your institution have to offer higher education programs (e.g. extent and areas) and how has your institution gone about developing these plans?
- 1.2 In what ways have you been involved in higher education programs within TAFE?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.4 What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.5 What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.6 What are the limitations of these arrangements?

Section Three: Processes of program development

- 3.1 What role will external stakeholders, such as industry and Office of Higher Education, have in shaping the program objectives, content and assessment practices of your higher education programs?
- 3.2 What governance, administrative and quality assurance arrangements does your institution need to develop to support your higher education provision? How will you go about putting this in place?
- 3.3 What impact, if any, will the different sectoral funding, reporting, and quality assurance arrangements have on the development of higher education programs in your institution?
- 3.4 Are there any other industrial, governance or broad policy frameworks that either constrain or enable the development of higher education programs in TAFE?

Section Four: Program provision

- 4.1 What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?

- 4.2 What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes?
- 4.3 What specific development is required for those who teach and assess in these programs?
- 4.4 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?
- 4.5 What kind of partnerships do you have with universities and how will your institution's provision of higher education affect these partnerships?

Section Five: Likely educational and institution implications

- 5.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 5.2 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 5.3 What impact will the provision of higher education in TAFE have on the way TAFE students and teachers think about themselves? How will they describe what they do?
- 5.4 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule G (Senior staff in TAFEs with no plans to offer HE)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About your institution

- 1.1 What kinds of high-level programs does your institution offer?
- 1.2 How would you like to see this provision develop?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions in other states offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 Why are TAFE institutions in your state not offering higher education programs now?
- 2.3 Do you think there is a role for TAFE in delivering higher education programs? Could you please explain your answer?
- 2.4 Are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.5 Are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.6 What are the benefits and limitations of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.7 What impact will the different state policies on delivering higher education in TAFE have on the way TAFEs develop in the different states?

Section Three: Challenges associated with higher education provision

Even though your TAFE is not planning to offer higher education programs, we are still interested in your views about the challenges associated with this provision:

- 3.1 What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 3.2 What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes?
- 3.3 What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 3.4 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?
- 3.5 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the same sort of outcomes for students who study VET programs in TAFE?
- 3.6 How will partnerships between universities and TAFEs be affected by the delivery of higher education programs in TAFE?

3.7 Are there any other industrial, governance or broad policy frameworks that either constrain or enable the development of higher education programs in TAFE?

Section Four: Likely educational and institution implications

4.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?

4.2 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education and training sector change?

4.3 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule H (Senior staff at a dual-sector university)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences. Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Determine interviewee's position and role within the institution

Section One: Your institution

- 1.1 How does your institution distinguish between programs offered in your higher education and TAFE divisions? How do you allocate programs to sectors?
- 1.2 Does the TAFE division offer any higher education programs, and are there any plans for it to do so?
- 1.3 Are there programs that 'span' the sectors (for example, bridging programs, dual-awards, etc). If so, what is the nature of these programs and how are they located in the sectors?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.4 If you think there is a role for TAFE in delivering higher education, what kinds of programs should TAFE offer?
- 2.5 If you think there is a role for TAFE in delivering higher education, what should be the key and defining characteristics of these programs?
- 2.6 What are the benefits and limitations of higher education programs in TAFE?

Section Three: Processes of program development

- 3.1 If a dual-sector university wished to develop higher education programs in its TAFE division, how would the dual-sector character of the university enable or constrain the development of these programs?
- 3.2 If a dual-sector university wished to develop higher education programs in its TAFE division, how would the different sectoral funding, reporting, and quality assurance arrangements shape the development of these programs?
- 3.3 Are there any industrial, governance or broad policy frameworks that either constrain or enable the development of higher education programs in the TAFE division of dual-sector universities?

- 3.4 How` are these constraining or enabling factors similar to or different than those confronted by stand-alone TAFEs?

Section Four: Program provision

- 4.1 What are the key challenges for stand-alone TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 4.2 What are the key challenges for TAFE divisions in dual-sector universities in offering higher education programs?
- 4.3 What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes in stand-alone TAFEs and the TAFE division in dual-sector universities?
- 4.4 What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 4.5 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?

Section Five: Likely educational and institution implications

- 5.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 5.2 What impact will the provision of higher education in stand-alone TAFEs have on your institution?
- 5.3 How would the provision of higher education programs offered by your TAFE division have an impact on the pathways between the sectors in your university?
- 5.4 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia change?
- 5.5 What impact will the provision of higher education in TAFE have on the way TAFE students and TAFE teachers think about themselves? How will they describe what they do?
- 5.6 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule I (Directors of Offices of Higher Education or equivalent)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences.

Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About you & your role

- 1.1 What is your role as the Director of the Office of Higher Education (or equivalent)?
- 1.2 What is the range and nature of higher education programs brought to your office for accreditation?
- 1.3 How has this changed in recent years?
- 1.4 In what ways have you been involved with the accreditation of higher education programs within TAFE?

Section Two: Kinds and qualities of these programs

- 2.1 Why are TAFE institutions offering higher education programs now?
- 2.2 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from those offered in universities?
- 2.3 How are higher education programs in TAFE different from other programs offered through TAFE?
- 2.4 What is the worth of having higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.5 What should be the key and defining characteristics of higher education programs in TAFE?
- 2.6 What are the limitations of higher education in TAFE?

Section Three: Processes of program approval

- 3.1 In what ways do the AQF levels and descriptors shape higher education programs in TAFE?
- 3.2 What process is used to accredit a TAFE higher education program?
- 3.3 What kind of process would you like to see a TAFE engage in when preparing a program to bring to your office?

Section Four: Challenges in program provision

- 4.1 What are the key challenges for TAFE institutions when offering higher education programs?
- 4.2 What kinds of arrangements are needed to maintain the quality of programs and standards of outcomes?

- 4.3 What specific development is required for those who have to teach and assess in these programs?
- 4.4 Is there a role for your office in ensuring the quality of programs and standards of outcomes in higher education programs in TAFE, and if there is, what is this role and how is it implemented?
- 4.5 What kinds of educational pathways would realise the best opportunities for higher education students within TAFE?

Section Five: Likely educational and institution implications

- 5.1 In what ways will relations between tertiary education sectors change as a result of TAFE institutes offering higher education qualifications and programs?
- 5.2 How should policy and practices within the post-compulsory education sector in Australia be changed to support these kinds of programs?
- 5.3 What will be the legacy of these changes in ten years' time?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly

Faculty of Education
Higher education in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes
Schedule J (Students)

This interview is part of a project that has been funded by National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) program that aims to gather information about the features of emerging 'higher education' provision (such as associate degrees and degrees) in TAFE institutions. We are seeking to understand why higher education programs are being offered now by TAFE, the purposes they are designed to meet, how TAFE is developing this provision and their likely educational and institutional consequences.

Please contribute freely. All the data gathered will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

Section One: About you

- 1.1 What are you studying in TAFE now?
 - 1.1.1 what stage of your program are you up to?
 - 1.1.2 are you studying full-time or part-time?
 - 1.1.3 are you also working? If so – what kind of work are you doing and about how many hours a week to you work?
- 1.2 What is your age-range?
 - 1.2.1 under 25 years
 - 1.2.2 25 – 29 years
 - 1.2.3 30 – 34 years
 - 1.2.4 35 – 39 years
 - 1.2.5 40 years and over
- 1.3 How did you find out about this program?
- 1.4 Please tell us about your prior experiences as a student
 - 1.4.1 how did you go at school?
 - 1.4.2 if you have done other study (like at TAFE or at university) how was it?
- 1.5 Why did you decide to study this program?
- 1.6 What do you hope to do when you finish it?
- 1.7 Why did you choose to study this program in TAFE and not another program at a university?
- 1.8 Why did you choose to study this program in TAFE and not other programs in TAFE like diplomas and advanced diplomas?
- 1.9 Can you get Fee-HELP to pay your fees?
 - 1.9.1 If Fee-HELP is available, what impact did it have on your decision to study this program?
 - 1.9.2 If you are paying up-front – has managing the fees been difficult?

Section Two: Your experience in higher education in TAFE

- 2.1 What are the benefits of studying higher education programs (like your program) in TAFE?

- 2.2 What are the drawbacks of studying higher education programs (like your program) in TAFE?
- 2.3 What did you expect studying at higher education in TAFE would be like? Has it turned out the way you expected?
- 2.4 What kind of contact do you have with:
 - 2.4.1 other students studying the same program?
 - 2.4.2 students studying other programs at TAFE?
 - 2.4.3 with your teachers?
- 2.5 What have you found to be challenging in studying higher education at TAFE?
- 2.6 How are your study skills – have you had to work on these since starting your program?
- 2.7 What have you found has helped you in studying higher education at TAFE?
- 2.8 How do you describe your studies to friends, family and acquaintances?

Section Three: Your thoughts on what should happen

- 3.1 What would you change about this program if you could make changes? Why?
- 3.2 What would stay the same? Why?
- 3.3 Would you recommend to your friends that they do this course? Why or why not?
- 3.4 What advice can you offer about how we can improve higher education programs at TAFE?

Are there any final comments that you would like to make about higher education provisions within TAFE?

Thank you for contribution to this research.

Leesa Wheelahan, Gavin Moodie, Stephen Billett and Ann Kelly